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Message Text

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47
ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 SSO-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 /030 W
---------- 128926
O 061235 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1727

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 2150

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCON, IR
SUBJECT: IRAN COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

REF: STATE 55401

SELECTION OF TEHRAN FOR SECOND TIME IN ROW AS SITE FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING SPEAKS FOR ITSELF AND IS REAFFIRMATION BY USG OF IRAN' S FRIENDLINESS AND STABIL-ITY. THIS IS COUNTRY WHICH HAS MOVED IN SHORT SPACE OF TEN YEARS FROM A FEUDAL STATE INTO 20 TH CENTURY; IS ONE OF MOST RAPIDLY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ASIA; ENJOYS EXTREMELY CLOSE RELATIONS WITH US; AND UNDER SHAH' S LEADERSHIP SEEKS PLAY MORE RESPONSIBLE ROLE IN AREA. COUNTRY IS INCREASINGLY SELF- CONFIDENT AND CONVINCED THAT STATUS AS FULLY DEVELOPED STATE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, BUT AS IT SEEKS NEW ROLE FOR ITSELF IN WORLD AFFAIRS, IT STILL LOOKS TO US FOR REASSURANCE AND SUPPORT. WE CAN CONTINUE TO HAVE INFLUENCE IN THIS COUNTRY WHICH IS VITAL TO OUR INTERESTS IN MIDDLE EAST PROVIDED WE TREAT IT MORE AS EQUAL, AND VALUED FRIEND AND REMEMBER IT IS IMPORTANT CUSTOMER.
DOMESTIC SCENE: ABOUT TEN YEARS AGO SHAH FOUND HIMSELF. HE INAUGURATED WHITE REVOLUTION, LAUNCHING COUNTRY ON ITS EXCITING SUCCESS STORY. SHAH, DURING THIS TEN YEAR PERIOD, HAS BRILLIANTLY STRENGTHENED HIS POSITION AND TODAY IS ABOUT AS SUCCESSFUL ABSOLUTE RULER AS CAN BE FOUND IN WORLD. HIS AUTHORITY IS OVERWHELMING AND IRAN IS EXPERIENCING POLITICAL STABILITY IT HAS NOT ENJOYED FOR CENTURIES. THERE IS NO VISIBLE THREAT TO REGIME.
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CONSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY EXISTS TO PROVIDE DEMOCRATIC SUBSTANCE TO IRANIAN POLITICAL LIFE AND SHAH SEEMS AT

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LEAST INTELLECTUALLY COMMITTED TO STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY. HOWEVER, HE IS RULER IN HURRY AND HE IS RELUCTANT TO RELINQUISH POWER OUT OF CONCERN THAT THIS MAY SLOW PACE OF DEVELOPMENT AND DELAY ATTAINMENT OF " GREAT CIVILIZATION" HE SEEKS FOR IRAN DURING HIS LIFETIME.

WHILE ALL IS WELL THERE ARE CLOUDS ON HORIZON. WILL GROWTH OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS KEEP PACE WITH REMARKABLE ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTINUE PROVIDE FRAMEWORK FOR POLITICAL EXPRESSION AND CHANGE? WILL LARGELY OTTOMAN ORIENTED BUREAUCRACY BE EQUAL TO 20 TH CENTURY CHALLENGE IT NOW FACES? WILL GROWING MIDDLE CLASS, FOREIGN TRAINED INTELLECTUALS AND STUDENTS CONTINUE TO ACCEPT SUBSTANTIAL RESTRICTIONS ON THEIR POLITICAL FREEDOM AND EXPRESSION? WILL SHAH CONTINUE TO BE ABLE CONTROL FORCES RELEASED BY PROCESS OF RAPID GROWTH AND CHANGE OR WILL HE INCREASINGLY TURN TO SECURITY APPARATUS TO CONTAIN THESE FORCES THEREBYINCREASING HIS ABSOLUTISM AND OPPOSITION TO IT. SHAH' S RECORD TO DATE SUGGESTS THESE ARE CLOUDS THAT WILL REMAIN ON DISTANT HORIZON FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

FOREIGN POLICY: A MAN OF CONSIDERABLE AMBITION FOR HIMSELF, HIS FAMILY, AND HIS COUNTRY, SHAH IS DETERMINED THAT IRAN WILL BE LEADING POWER IN THIS PART OF WORLD AND ONE THAT WILL COMMAND RESPECT EVEN AMONG GREAT POWERS. KEEPING PACE WITH IRAN' S ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MILITARY DEVELOPMENT, TEHRAN HAS BECOME DIPLOMATIC BEEHIVE WITH FOREIGN STATESMEN COMING AND GOING ALMOST EVERY DAY. IN PAST YEAR SHAH AND/ OR EMPRESS HAVE VISITED MANY IMPORTANT FOREIGN CAPITALS, WHILE TEHRAN HAS BEEN MECCA FOR LEADERS OF EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND SMALLER POWERS. WITHIN REGION IRAN IS BEGINNING TO ACQUIRE AID DONOR STATUS WITH MODEST AMOUNTS OF MILITARY AND/ OR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES INCLUDING PAKISTAN OMAN, YEMEN AND JORDAN.

THUS, SHAH APPEARS TO BE PLAYING INDEPENDENT DIPLOMATIC ROLE ON WORLD STAGE. BUT JUST BELOW SURFACE LIES

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DEEP AND ABIDING FEAR OF SOVIET POWER AND FUNDAMENTAL MISTRUST OF SOVIET INTENTIONS. SOVIET TREATY ARRANGEMENTS WITH IRAQ AND INDIA HAVE INCREASED SHAH' S APPREHENSIONS ABOUT WHAT HE CONSIDERS TO BE SINISTER PINCERS MOVEMENT AIMED AT IRANIAN INTERESTS IN HIGHLY STRATEGIC PERSIAN GULF AREA.

FEARING SOVIET POWER AS HE DOES, SHAH RELIES ULTIMATELY ON AMERICAN STRENGTH TO PRESERVE IRAN' S INDEPENDENCE AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. TO NEWCOMER, SHAH' S CONCERN WITH

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SOVIET MACHINATIONS MAY APPEAR TO BE ALMOST OBSESSION. BUT GIVEN UNHAPPY HISTORY OF IRAN' S RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA, IN WHICH IRAN ALWAYS SEEMS TO HAVE COME OUT SECOND BEST, AND GIVEN SHAH' S AND HIS FATHER' S TRIBULATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION, HIS FEARS ASSUME MORE RATIONAL PROPORTIONS. SHAH IS UNEASY ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF AMERICAN- SOVIET DETENT, REASONING THAT DETENTE WILL RELEASE SOVIET ENERGIES FOR FURTHER PROBINGS IN THIS PART OF WORLD AND THAT US WILL LET DOWN ITS GUARD IN ATMOSPHERE OF IMPROVED AMERICAN- SOVIET RELATIONS.

SHAH IS NOT WITHOUT HIS LIMITATIONS BUT HE HAS BUILT STABLE AND RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY WHICH IS OUR MOST RELIABLE FRIEND IN THIS REGION, AND PARTICULARLY IN PERSIAN GULF AREA ON WHICH WE WILL SOON BE HEAVILY DEPENDENT FOR OUR GROWING PETROLEUM REQUIREMENTS. RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAN AND U. S. ARE EXTREMELY CORDIAL NOW AND THERE IS NO REASON THEY SHOULD NOT CONTINUE THIS WAY TO OUR CONTINUING MUTUAL ADVANTAGE. IT IS RELEVANT THAT DURING AMBASSADOR' S FIRST AUDIENCE WITH SHAH APRIL 5, HE TOLD AMBASSADOR HE HAD NO PROBLEMS TO RAISE.

POLITICAL MILITARY: IRAN HAS EMBARKED ON MASSIVE PROGRAM OF MODERNIZATION AND EXPANSION OF ITS ARMED FORCES. HARDWAREACQUISITIONS INCLUDE OVER 500 HELICOPTERS, 700 CHIEFTAIN TANKS, SIX SQUADRONS OF F-4 ES AND EIGHT OF F-5 ES, TWO DDS AND POSSIBLY ANOTHER PAIR OF HEAVY DESTOYERS. WITH SIX P-3 ES AND AND SUPPORTING AERIAL TANKERS, IRAN WILL HAVE RECONNAISSANCE AND ASW CAPABILITY FAR OUT INTO INDIAN OCEAN, DEFINED BY SHAH AS NEW " SECURITY FRONTIER". PERSONNEL STRENGTH OF THREE SERVICES WILL RISE FROM ABOUT 250,000 TO OVER 300,000 BY 1976. LARGE SCALE

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION IS UNDER WAY OR PLANNED, PARTICULARLY ON PERSIAN GULF AND IN EAST WHERE NEW MILITARY CONCENTRATIONS ARE DESIGNED TO COUNTER FEARED CONSEQUENCES OF POSSIBLE INSTABILITY IN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN PERCEIVED BY IRAN TO BE SOVIET INSPIRED. A MAJOR THREE- SERVICE BASE IS BEING BUILT ON GULF OF OMAN AT CHAR BAHAR.

THE IRANIAN BUILDUP WILL FURTHER STRENGTHEN OUR LONGSTANDING CLOSE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP THROUGH ARMISH/ MAAG. WE ARE SELLING OVER $3 BILLION IN MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND HAVE AGREED TO ASSIGN UP TO 600 TECHNICIANS FOR TRAINING. AMERICAN FIRMS WITH DIRECT CONTRACTS WITH GOI WILL BRING IN EVEN GREATER NUMBER OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS. OUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROGRAM IS NOT WITHOUT SOME CONCERN, FOR WE FEEL THAT THE GOI HAS NOT GIVEN ADEQUATE ATTENTION TO EITHER FINANCIAL OR MANPOWER IMPLICATIONS

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OF ITS MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. HERETOFORE, HOWEVER, GOI HAS SUCCESSFULLY FINANCED ITS HARDWARE ACQUISITIONS AND FOUND SKILLED PERSONNEL WITHOUT UNDUE STRAIN ON CIVILIAN SECTOR.

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 SSO-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 /030 W
---------- 129074
O 061235 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1728

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 2150

IRAN HAS USED ITS SUPERIOR MILITARY STRENGTH WITH GREAT CARE. THE GENDARMERIE, RATHER THAN MORE PRESTIGIOUS GOUND FORCES, MAN IRAQI BORDER. LIMITED SUPPORT HAS GOVE TO OMAN (ABOUT 6 HELICOPTERS AND 200-300 TROOPS). ALTHOUGH SHAH HAS WISHED TO ASSIST PAKISTAN , HE HAS SO FAR RESPECTED OUR REFUSAL TO PERMIT TRANSFER OF US- ORIGIN EQUIPMENT.

THE ECONOMY: POLITICAL STABILITY, BURGEONING OIL REVENUES, AND EXISTENCE OF ABLE ENTREPRENEURAL ELITE ENABLE IRAN TO ENJOY EXTREMELY RAPID RATE OF ERONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IRANIAN GNP IN REAL TERMS HAS INCREASED ANNUALLY BY AVERAGE OF OVER 11 PERCENT DURING PAST FIVE- YEAR PERIOD. OIL REVENUES FOR CURRENT IRAN YEAR (1352) ARE PROJECTED AT $3.4 BILLION PROVIDING GOI WITH FUNDS FOR AMBITIOUS $35 BILLION FIVE-()3-4 (1973-78) DEVELOPMENT EFFORT (FIFTH PLAN) AND SUPPORTING HEAVY PUBLIC SECTOR OUTLAYS FOR BOTH DEFENSE AND SOCIAL SERVICES. PRESENT HIGH RATE OF SAVINGS WITH ABOUT 25 PERCENT GNP ALLOCATED FOR INVESTMENT FIVES RISE TO EXPECTATION THAT GOI' S FIFTH PLAN GOAL OF AN 11 PERCENT ANNUAL RISE IN GNP WILL BE LARGELY ACCOMPLISHED.

WITH CONSUMER GOODS- ORIENTED INDUSTRIAL BASE WELL ESTABLISHED, GOI IS NOW FOCUSING RESOURCES ON INTERMEDIATE AND HEAVY INDUSTRY, MEANS TO PROMOTE A HIGHER DEGREE OFECONOMIC SELF- SUFFICIENCY, AND FACILITIES TO CREATE OTHER EXPORT EARNINGS. ATTENTION ALSO BEING DEVOTED TO THE DEPRESSED SECTORS OF IRAN' S ECONOMY, I. E. AGRICUL- TURE AND PROVINCES, WHERE EMPHASIS IS BEING GIVEN TO

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ORGANIZATION OF FARM COOPERATIVES, THE INTRODUCTION OF AGRI- BUSINESS, AND CREATION OF COTTAGE INDUSTRY. THE GOI IS ALSO ATTACHING, FOR FIRST TIME, PRIORITY TO LONG-STANDING PROBLEMS OF PROVIDING MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR A LARGELY UNEDUCATED WORKFORCE WHICH IS EXPANDING BY OVER FIVE PERCENT ANNUALLY, AND A BADLY SKEWED DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME.

RAPID PACE OF DEVELOPMENT AND FORCED EXPANSION OF IRAN' S MILITARY HAVE CAUSED THE GOI TO RELY HEAVILY ON DEFICIT FINANCING AND FOREIGN BORROWING. LATTER WILL TOP $1.0 BILLION IN CURRENT IRANIAN YEAR AND DEBT SERVICING WILL REQUIRE UP TO 20 PERCENT OF IRAN' S SUBSTANTIAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS OVER NEXT FIVE- SEVEN- YEAR PERIOD. OVER 30 PERCENT OF CURRENTBUDGET IS NOT COVERED BY REVENUES AND 1352 DEFICIT IS ESTIMATED AT ABOUT $2.4 BILLION. ITS FINANCING WILL INDUCE CONSIDERABLE INFLATIONARY PRESSURE AND WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL DIVERSION OF RESOURCES AWAY FROM PRIVATE SECTOR. WE ARE ANTICIPATING SOME FINANCIAL HEARTBURN BUT DO NOT ENVISAGE FISCAL DISASTER.

IRAN HAS BECOME A LEADING MIDDLE EAST MARKET WITH IMPORTS OF OVER $4 BILLION PROJECTED FOR 1352. US IS IRAN' SMAJOR SUPPLIER, AND WE EXPECT TO MAINTAIN OUR 20-21 PERCENT SHARE OF THIS MARKET. WHILE OIL RELATIONSHIP WITH CONSORTIUM HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERED, US INVESTMENT IN JOINT OIL VENTURES WITH GOI IS PRESENTLY ABOUT $150 MILLION. NON- OIL, LARGELY INDUSTRIAL, INVESTMENT TOTALS $130 MILLION, AND IRAN IS NOW SITE OF NEW MAJOR US INVESTMENT INTERESTS WHICH INCLUDE A POSSIBLE BILLION DOLLAR OUTLAY FOR LNG PROJECTS AND SIGNIFICANT EXPENDITURES FOR JOINT US- IRANIAN AUTO, CABLE, ARTIFICIAL FIBER, AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT FACILITIES.

PETROLEUM: OIL AFFAIRS IN 1972 WERE DOMINATED BY NEGOTIATIONS WITH CONSORTIUM. DETERMINED TO ASSERT PREEMINENT POSITION IN OIL MATTERS, SHAH INFORMED CONSORTIUM THAT 1954 AGREEMENT WAS NO LONGER SATISFACTORY; CONSORTIUM MIGHT CONTINUE ON PRESENT BASIS UNTIL 1979; OR ALTERNATIVELY, NEGOTIATE LONG- TERM PREFERENTIAL SALES-PURCHASE CONTRACT ARRANGEMENT WITH IRAN. DESPITE US AND UK

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REPRESENTATIONS, SHEH MADE ULTIMATUM PUBLIC IN SPEECH JANUARY 23. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WAS SUBSEQUENTLY SIGNED BY SHAH AND COMPANIES GIVING DETAILED BASIC PRINCIPLES OF NEW AGREEMENT.

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NEW ARRANGMENTS LARGELY SATISFY SHAH' S DEMANDS
THROUGH 20- YEAR SALES CONTRACTS AND CREATION OF IRANIAN
COMPANY THROUGH WHICH CONSORTIUM WILL PROVIDE FOR AT
LEAST FIVE YEARS MANAGEMENT SERVICES UNDER CONTRACT TO NIOC.
REMAINING ISSUES ARE COMPENSATION TO BE PAID CONSORTIUM
AND DETERMINATION OF AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS TO
IRAN NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT HER OIL INCOME IS PROPORTION-
ATELY EQUIVALENT TO THOSE TO BE RECEIVED BY NATIONS CONCERNED
IN GENERAL PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT.

NARCOTICS: IRAN PRODUCES OPIUM FOR DOMESTIC USE. IT
DOES NOT IN ANY WAY CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NARCOTIC PROBLEMS.
OUR NARCOTICS PROGRAM IS AIMED AT PREVENTING IRAN FROM BE-
COMING
AS SOURCE OR TRANSIT ROUTE FOR OPIATES TO US MARKET
AND AT ELIMINATING IRANIAN INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL
HASHISH TRAFFIC. IRAN' S ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES COOPERATE
CLOSELY AND EFFECTIVELY WITH US AND NOW PARTICIPATE IN
JOINT INVESTIGATIONS OF DRUG SMUGGLING BOTH IN IRAN AND
ABROAD AND EXCHANGE INTELLIGENCE ON A DAILY BASIS. IRAN
IS IMPROVING ITS ANTI- SMUGGLING CAPABILITY, BY PURCHASING
HELICOPTERS, OFF- TRAIL MOTORCYCLES, NIGHT- VISION DEVICES
AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. LITTLE OF THIS EQUIPMENT IS YET IN
USE BUT RECENT LARGE- SCALE SEIZURES OF HASHISH AND OPIUM
(INCLUDING THE LARGEST SINGLE RECORDED SEIZURE OF 12.7
TONS) AUGUR FOR FUTURE SUCCESS.

ON INTERNATIONAL FRONT, WE HOPE THAT SOME COOPERATION
WITH AFGHANISTAN TO CONTROL SMUGGLING MAY BE POSSIBLE.
WE ARE PROCEEDING WITH STUDY OF SMUGGLING IN PERSIAN GULF
TO DETERMINE ITS PATTERN AND EXTENT.

POST STAFFING: MISSION INCLUDING TWO CONSULATES COMPRISES
2,560 OFFICIAL AMERICANS: 348 CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES (OF WHICH
69 ARE STATE), 612 MILITARY PERSONNEL AND 1600 DEPENDENTS.
IN ADDITION, MISSION HAS 504 IRANIAN EMPLOYEES.

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WITH PLANNED ASSIGNEMENT ABOUT 600 MILITARY PERSONNEL
(350 WITH FAMILIES) OFFICIAL FAMILY EXPECTED EXPAND TO
4,000 IN 1974. ARRANGMENTS WITHIN MISSION AND GOI TO COPE
WITH EXPANSION ARE PROCEEDING SATISFACTORILY.

AREAS OF CONCERN IN POST OPERATIONS:

1. WE ARE IN FINACIAL STRAITS MAINLY BECAUSE OF
DEVALUATION. ADDITIONAL $100,000 REQUIRED TO FUND POST FOR
BALANCE THIS FISCAL YEAR, $70,000 OF WHICH REPRESENTS MANDA-
TORY INCREASES RESULTING FROM DEVALUATION.

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2. DELAY IN ADJUSTING HOUSING AND COST- OF- LIVING ALLOWANCES TO COMPENSATE FOR 11.1 PERCENT DEVALUATION LOSS IN PURCHASING POWER HAS ADVERSELY AFFECTED MORALE AND CREATED UNFORTUANTE DISPARITIES WITHIN THE MISSION. OUR MILITARY COLLEAGUES HAD THEIR ALLOWANCES RAISED IMMED-IATELY FOLLOWING DEVALUATION AND THIS TYPE OF DISPARITY CREATES UNHEALTHY AND UNFAIR SITUATION WITHIN MISSION.

3. OUR CONSULAR OPERATIONS ARE IN DIFFICULTY BECAUSE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES DEVOTED TO THIS FUNCTION HAVE NOT KEPT PACE WITH EXPANSION OF AMERICAN COMMUNITIES OVERSEAS AND INCREASINGLY LARGE NUMBERS OF FOREIGNERS WISHING TRAVEL OR STUDY IN US. IN TEHRAN WE NEED BETTER QUARTERS AND ADDITIONAL MANPOWET TO PROVITE CONSULAR SERVICES EXPECTED OF US UNDEROUR LAWS AND REGULATIONS. HELMS

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